

**TESTIMONY OF WEI JINGSHENG**  
**VISITING SCHOLAR, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**  
**ON ORGAN TRAFFICKING BY THE CHINESE COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT**  
  
**before the,**  
**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND**  
**GOVERNMENT REFORM & OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
  
**of the**  
**UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
  
**June 4, 1998**

Chairman Gilman, Chairman Burton, and members of the committees, thank you for holding this hearing and inviting me to speak today.

My main goal in coming to this hearing today is to relay to you the evidence a 20-year-old young man gave to me when he was to be executed more than 18 years ago.

Eighteen years ago, I was sentenced to fifteen years in prison by the Chinese government for counterrevolution. Due to the personal animosity of China's dictator Deng Xiaoping held for me, I was initially held on death row for more than eight months. *The death row is specifically for those criminals who are to be executed and who may be executed. The treatment is worse than in regular prisons.* According to China's own regulations, prisoners sent to the death row are not to spend more than sixty (60) days in detention there. This is because the Chinese prison authorities own experience showed that on the average the prisoner could not maintain control over their emotions for more than 60 days, and also because the process for carrying out the death sentence and execution historically did not exceed 60 days.

Prior to being sent to death row, I had heard of the removal of condemned prisoners' organs for use in medical research and in tests organs. Most people, upon hearing of this practice, really cannot believe it. I shared that same disbelief. On death row, after I often heard the screams of and unusual sounds of struggle of the prisoners who were to be executed, these horrible noises caused me to question whether this practice could in fact happen. It caused me to look for an opportunity to try and confirm with a prisoner escort who escorted men about to be executed whether it were true or false. He lowered his head to look for guards, and in a whisper told me: "You guessed right. This is a fact." *At that time I remember asking another question, "All the executed prisoners get the same thing?"* He answered, "There are almost no exceptions. They first are given anesthesia. Just the same as killing a pig." I asked, "How do prisoners get

to the execution ground then? They're already dead." He said, "We use cloth to wrap them up and bring them to the execution ground. No one cares if they are alive or dead."

Although I knew that this prisoner escort respected me and wouldn't cheat me, I still couldn't believe it was a fact. I thought, unless there were more concrete evidence, I still couldn't entirely believe that man was capable of such a thing.

One day in the spring of 1980, because the number of condemned prisoners was larger than normal, they brought a condemned prisoner to my cramped cell. Zhang, 20 years *old from Beijing*. I saw his legs were injured by his leg irons and his hands were cuffed behind his back. He could not eat, drink or go to the bathroom by himself. I tore a piece of my shirt and wrapped it around his leg irons. I also helped him eat and drink, and assisted him with his bodily needs. He said to me, "I know of the good things you did at Democracy Wall, I heard what you did when I was outside. I knew long ago that you were a good guy, so what is not worth being executed over. To be placed on death row really isn't fair."

His appeal went proceeded quickly, and it wasn't more than 20 days before it went through the entire procedure. The plan was that he would be executed within three or five days. At that point, he became calm, generally resigned and his temperament mellowed. From morning to night, he constantly repeated how sorry he was for not being able to take care of his parents, particularly his father. He said how sorry he was for his pregnant girlfriend, because they had made plans to marry in a couple of months. He once said to me, "What I regret in the end is that only now do I meet you. If I could avoid death, or even die later just to help you, that would be better. That way I finally would have done something. I really regret that now."

At that I suddenly thought, why couldn't he help me try to prove the practice of stealing organs? After I briefly explained what I knew about this to him, I asked if he were willing to help me prove once and for all if this were true or false. He quickly answered, "I'm willing. If you were able to take the news of this practice and spread it to the outside, then it would give me something for the next life. If in life I could not help you, helping you in death is something. We discussed it thoroughly: when he was brought out to the execution grounds, if he saw among the guards and police any people dressed in white clothes carrying medical bags, then he was to shout out, "I'm not sick, I don't need a doctor." If he didn't see such people in white clothes with medical equipment, then he would cry out as a normal prisoner.

The day following our discussion at 10:00 in the morning, they came for him. Before the procedures for carrying out the execution began, I was worried that he would not remember our discussion of the previous night. So when he was brought out I was very nervous and listened very carefully. I listened for a long time, and when I didn't hear any sounds of a struggle, then I became disappointed. Just at that moment, I heard a loud and clear voice coming from the end of corridor of death row: "I'm not sick, I don't

need a doctor.” At the second yell, there were the sounds of a scuffle. At the third yell, I could only hear half of his phrase as if someone had muzzled him.

My first feeling was of satisfaction, knowing that this evidence finally proved this practice. But this feeling was quickly replaced by another. My second feeling was of heaviness, knowing that this young man used his life to record an unbelievable crime. If I did not have the opportunity to tell others of this evil, if I did not have the opportunity to try and stop this evil from continuing, then I would have to apologize to this young man. All this time, I have deeply felt this responsibility. We must stop this practice.

Thank you.